



BiH Dayton Project



Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi in BiH: Joint press conference with the BiH Presidency

 November 29, 2022

The EU delegation posted Neighbourhood and Enlargement Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi's [remarks](#) at a joint press conference with the BiH Presidency. The full text is below.

Honorable Members of the Presidency,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dobar dan! It is excellent to be back in Sarajevo and especially at this point in time. We have elections successfully concluded, clear results and we have an EU proposal to present to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to its people.

First of all, I need to congratulate the Members of the Presidency for not only to being elected but also taking their office so swiftly insuring we can pick up work immediately right after the election. This is something very much appreciated in Brussels and very much looked at in our national capitals.

Because I came to Bosnia and Herzegovina in a critical time, we all in the EU, in our neighborhood, our partners and our allies are in the middle of a geopolitical turmoil

that is brought by a war so close to us. In these turbulent times it is our outmost strategic interest and need to strengthen all our partnerships and we need reliable, trusted allies in our neighborhood. We need to move faster ahead with our common positive agenda.

More than half month ago we have put a recommendation on the table of the Council, of our member states, to grant candidate status to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore I came to Sarajevo to discuss the next steps ahead, to be clear; how do we get this done for Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Granting the candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina will have to be decided by our member states and granting the candidate status is an offer for Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is an offer for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are doing this for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are very transparent because our recommendation is very clear. We want candidate status granted to Bosnia and Herzegovina now. But this is also recommendation that comes from our side with high expectations. The EU path is open but it requires your country to deliver. We expect these steps to be taken forward without delay. It is now for the political leaders of this country to turn this into reality for the people of this country.

Of course, your role is decisive to make it real, tangible and visible. So, we can report about the progress ahead of December's European Council this year that we very much hope will take the positive decision and grant the candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

For this to take place we will need the outgoing Council of Ministers to adopt all pending measures to advance on the EU agenda.

We need the Presidency to ensure that EU integration and the 14 key priorities are front and center in program of all governments during the next 4 years.

The start of this political mandate provide now a chance to turn a page and to accelerate the work towards fulfilling the 14 key priorities.

I am very pleased to hear from all Members of Presidency that this is the aim of the Presidency as well and this is very reassuring.

Given the challenges and the tasks ahead, of course I have encouraged the Members of Presidency to step up their efforts and create an environment of trust, constructive dialogue and good cooperation. So, that the Presidency can become even more effective as it was in the past.

We already see some positive developments since we have put the proposal on the table and that is again very encouraging. We see that in the last 6 weeks things have been moving faster than ever. I do hope that this will only accelerate even further. Because I have great trust and expectations in the leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Otherwise we would not have engaged in this way with Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is why we are ready to help them, to work for the citizens of this country to deliver on the EU agenda and to deliver the candidate status and a real perspective of EU membership for the youth and for the economy of this country. It is only through that the country will achieve his goals enshrined in the constitution.

You can always count on me. You can rest assured that we will help you with everything we have and we need good news emerging from Sarajevo, even more good news.

Thank you.

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